June 21. 1841

Oliver A Shaw

In behalf of St Peters Ch

at Phoenixville

Chester County

Penn.

320 —

Philada, June 21st, 1841.

Gentlemen,

The undersigned, in behalf of St. Peter's Church, Phoenixville, Chester Co. Penn.) solicits your pecuniary aid.

The edifice intended for the worship of said Church is nearly completed; and the sum of five hundred dollars, judiciously expended, would render it fit for consecration.

Respectfully,

Oliver A. Shaw,
Minister of St. Peter's Church,
Phoenixville, Chester Co. Penn.)

N° 289 S-10th

South 4th Street 3 Dec. 1841

Dear Sir.

The weather prevents my coming to see you, and perhaps it is fortunate, as it may be best to state in writing the result of my interview with the Sexton.

I sent him a note yesterday noon, informing him that the Vestry had requested me to have a conversation with him, & desiring him to call, which he did in the evening.

I told him that at <u>my own instance</u> the Vestry had appointed a Committee to speak to him upon the manner in which the duties of Sexton had been performed, and that in a spirit of friendship to him, and with a desire that he should keep the office, if it was useful to him, and it could be executed as it ought to be, I would state some of the deficiencies. That the Committee, also at my instance, consisted of but one person. I then mentioned,

1. His absence from the Church frequently during the service.
2. The want of due & regular assistance to the Rector.
3. The want of due attention to the cleanliness of the Church.
4. The neglect to give the Church proper ventilation.

among the instances under the 2d head, I spoke of the Rector raising the blinds in the Chancel, for the Bishop, last Sunday.-

These remarks were made in a temper of so much friendliness to him, both real & apparent, that our conversation throughout was calm & reasonable on both sides. & I give you his answers-

To the

1. That his salary was too low- that his compensation as Sexton was 200 dls per annum- that he used besides to have 2 dls for each burial fee- amounting sometimes to 80 in a year, & that they now did

not exceed 30. – That as Clerk his fee of $\frac{25}{100}$ for each baptism was not paid – & that his fee of 1 dollar for serving notices of Vestry meetings, & certificates, was of trifling amount. – That Cotteril of St. Peters had 300 dls (I think) per annum, and $20 for the Baptism fees. – That if raised for him, so as to make his Salary sufficient, he could hire a man to assist him. – That when he was absent from the Church, he sent a boy.

II. That when he was not at the Church himself, which he almost always was, at the beginning of the service on Sundays, he sent a boy. – That as to the blinds, he was in the Church at the time, & while Dr Dow was raising those in the Chancel, he was raising those in the South Gallery.

III. That he paid for the cleaning of the Church himself – namely for sweeping it on Fridays, & dusting it – at an expence of One dollar per week, or 52 dollars per annum. – That it had been washed & scrubbed but once since he had been Sexton, namely after it was renewed; – and that from the number of services in the Church, it was impossible that sweeping & dusting it once a week, should keep it clean.

IV. That the foul air in the Church was not because he did not ventilate it, but because the furnaces were not supplied by pure air from without, but from the air of the Church. He did open it on Saturdays, & that if he should open it on Sundays, he could not warm it again: That he was unable by the Furnaces to raise the heat above 60 in the Church: and that he had pointed out the defect of the furnaces to two or three of the gentlemen of the Vestry immediately before the last vestry meeting. –

My general remarks to these answers were – that personal attendance during service was in my opinion, and I thought in that of the Vestry indispensable – and that as to the facts of Salary – mode of clean-

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Moses Kempton Esq

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-ing. & furnaces, I would inquire & see him again. I could say then, that it would be absolutely necessary to give more time and attention to the duties - & that I was in hopes he could do it, particularly if the office was useful to his business as an undertaker - but that I would write him a note requesting to see him after I conversed with you, & made the necessary inquiries.

The interview was such as I confess I did not expect it would be; & to keep it in this train, I advised him on leaving, not to converse on the subject, but to leave it as it stood, till I saw him again - & he said he would do so.

This morning he called at 9 o'clock - & told me that he had been taken a little by surprize last evening; & that as the Vestry had determined to supply his place, he should decline continuing Sexton. His quarter would expire 10 January & he then would quit. He complained that the gentlemen who knew about the Furnaces, had not stated it at the meeting. I told him that I had thought the thing was in train to enable him to give the proper time & attention, according to his own views, but that he was the best judge of what he should do. He said he should decline at the end of the quarter.

He further said that Dr Dow was the cause of the movement, to which I replied, that he was mistaken in the fact - that I had moved the resolution - & that Dr Dow had nothing to do with it. That while I wished him well, & was always satisfied with the performance of his business as Undertaker out of the Church, I as a Vestryman deemed it my duty to take the step on behalf of the congregation, within the Church.

The final result is what I expected. If you will keep this letter, which I mean only for you or any of the Vestry, I will repeat so much as is necessary, as my report when the Vestry shall meet.

Moses Kempton Esq

Yours truly Wm. Bunting

3 December 1844 —

H. Bunny to M Kempton

on the Subject of his conversation

with R R Bringhurst the Softer

Read to Society at the

Meeting held the 15 Dec 44